

MARVEL

2

LGY#167

VENOM

DONNY CATES • RYAN STEGMAN • JP MAYER • FRANK MARTIN

YEARS AGO, PETER PARKER (A.K.A. THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN) ACCIDENTALLY BONDED WITH AN AGGRESSIVE ORGANISM CALLED A SYMBIOTE.

AFTER DISCOVERING IT INTENDED TO MAKE THEIR UNION PERMANENT, HE REJECTED THE CREATURE, WHICH SOON FOUND A NEW HOST IN DISGRACED REPORTER **EDDIE BROCK**.

THEIR UNION GRANTED EDDIE POWERS SIMILAR TO THOSE OF SPIDER-MAN, AS WELL AS A NUMBER OF OTHER UNIQUE ABILITIES. TOGETHER, THEY NOW FIGHT CRIME AS THE WICKED WEB-SLINGER CALLED...

VENOM

A DARKNESS HAS AWAKENED IN EDDIE BROCK’S ALIEN SYMBIOTE. IN RECENT WEEKS, IT HAS BEEN DIFFICULT TO CONTROL AND HAS EVEN DISOBEYED ITS HUMAN HOST.

DURING AN INADVERTENT CONFLICT WITH THE VILLAINOUS JACK O’LANTERN, THE SYMBIOTE BECAME EXCEPTIONALLY VIOLENT AND SPOKE ALOUD IN A LANGUAGE EDDIE HAS NEVER HEARD BEFORE.

ONLY AFTER BEING AMBUSHED BY A MAN NAMED **REX STRICKLAND** DID VENOM LEARN THE TRUTH — THAT HIS SYMBIOTE WAS NOT THE FIRST TO LAND ON EARTH.

REX, A FORMER SOLDIER, REVEALED THAT S.H.I.E.L.D. HAD DISCOVERED AN ANCIENT SYMBIOTE CREATURE YEARS AGO. ALONG WITH THE OTHER MEN IN HIS PLATOON, HE VOLUNTEERED TO RECEIVE A SMALL SAMPLE OF IT.

BUT WHEN VENOM STAGED A DARING RESCUE TO SAVE REX’S SQUADMATES FROM S.H.I.E.L.D. CUSTODY, HE FOUND THAT THE MEN REX ONCE KNEW WERE ALL DEAD — COMPLETELY CONSUMED BY THEIR SYMBIOTES AND GUARDING SOMETHING MUCH, MUCH WORSE...


DONNY CATES WRITER **RYAN STEGMAN** PENCILER **JP MAYER** INKER

FRANK MARTIN COLOR ARTIST **VC’S CLAYTON COWLES** LETTERER

RYAN STEGMAN & FRANK MARTIN COVER ARTISTS **SAM KEITH** VARIANT COVER ARTIST **MIKE DEL MUNDO** YOUNG GUNS VARIANT COVER ARTIST

ANTHONY GAMBINO TITLE PAGE DESIGN **LAUREN AMARO** ASSISTANT EDITOR **DEVIN LEWIS** EDITOR **NICK LOWE** EXECUTIVE EDITOR

C.B. CEBULSKI EDITOR IN CHIEF **JOE QUESADA** CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER **DAN BUCKLEY** PRESIDENT **ALAN FINE** EXECUTIVE PRODUCER




IT'S BEEN
EIGHTEEN
HOURS SINCE
I SENT BROCK
ON A MISSION
TO SAVE MY
BROTHERS.



AND TEN
HOURS SINCE
HE LAST MADE
CONTACT.




I FEAR THE
MISSION
AND MY
FRIENDS,
ARE LOST.



THAT'S THE
HEART OF
ALL OF THIS,
THOUGH,
ISN'T IT?



ON THE
INSIDE.



BENEATH
THE BLACK...

AND I BEGIN TO
QUESTION WHAT
I HAVE DONE
TRUSTING THIS
MAN I HAVE
NEVER MET, AND
KNOW NOTHING
ABOUT.

WHO IS
EDDIE
BROCK?



I DIG
INTO
HIM...

I FIND MORE QUESTIONS.

MOTHER
DIED IN
CHILDBIRTH.
CATHOLIC
AS HELL.
ONLY CHILD.

FATHER
WAS RICH,
BUT LOST
IT ALL
AFTER
EDDIE WAS
INVOLVED
IN SOME
SORT OF
ACCIDENT
WHEN HE
WAS A KID.



WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU, EDDIE?



KID'S SMART.
GOES TO
COLLEGE.
GETS A GIG AT
THE DAILY
GLOBE.
WRITES ABOUT
MURDER.

UNSOLVED
STUFF.
SERIAL
KILLERS.
THAT KIND
OF THING.

WHY ARE YOU SO ATTRACTED TO THIS STUFF?



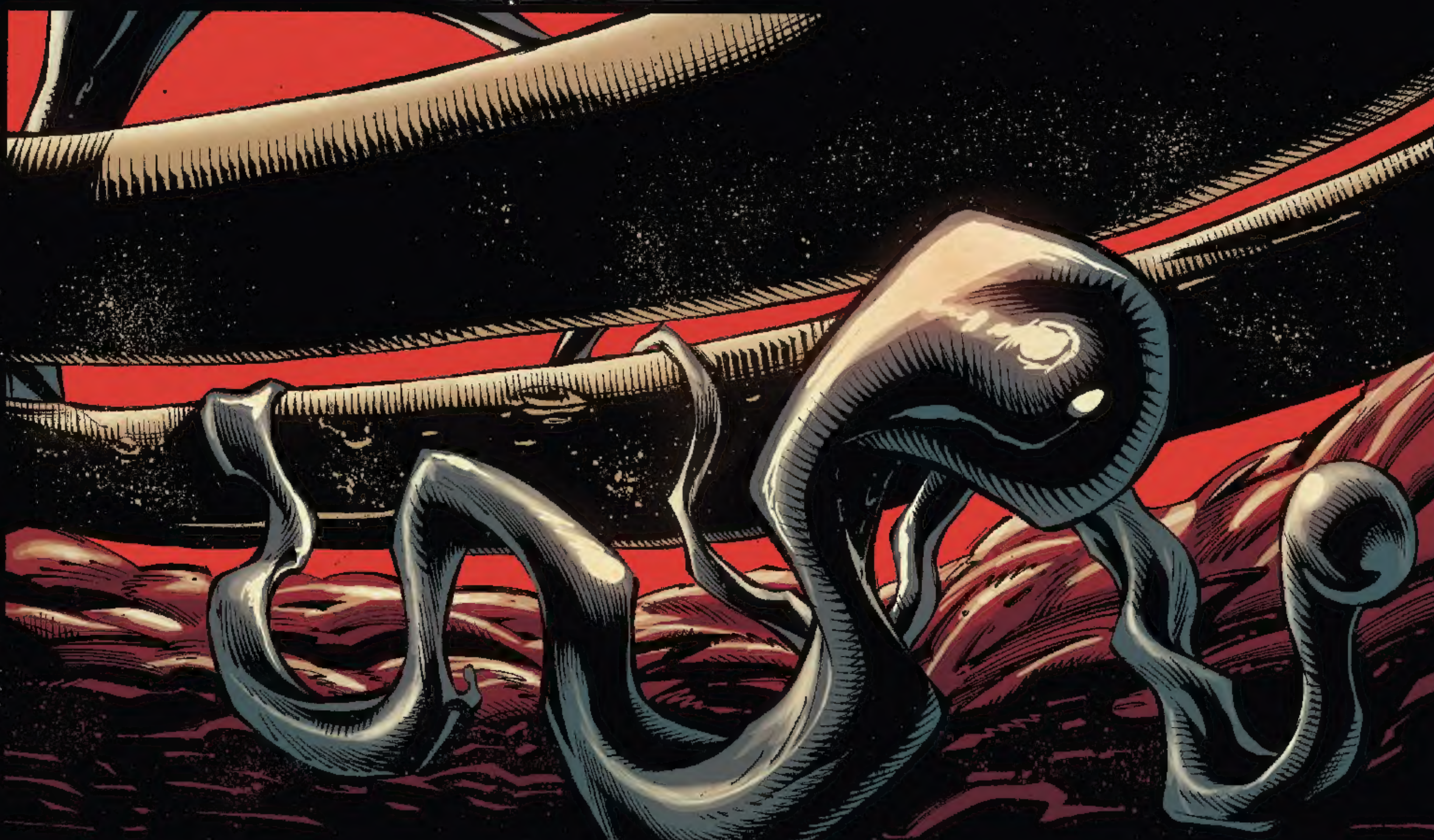
ONE DAY HE
WRITES THE
WRONG THING
ABOUT THE
WRONG GUY.
GETS
@#%*-CANNED
FROM THE
PAPER.

FALLS OFF
THE FACE OF
THE EARTH.

WHERE DID YOU GO?

SHOWS BACK
UP WITH A SLICK
NEW ALIEN
COSTUME.
CALLS HIMSELF
VENOM.

A SUPER
VILLAIN IN NEW
YORK TRYING
TO KILL
SPIDER-MAN.



WHY HIM? WHAT THE HELL DID SPIDER-MAN DO TO YOU?



BUT BLINK
AN EYE, AND
NOW HE'S A
GOOD GUY
IN SAN
FRANCISCO
TRYING TO
PROTECT
PEOPLE.

WHY DO YOU CARE SO MUCH FOR THE INNOCENT?

LOTS MORE THINGS LIKE
THAT, IN BETWEEN AND AFTER.

CANCER.

ANTI-VENOM.

CARNAGE.

TOXIN.



BORN AND
UNBORN AND
REBORN.

OVER AND
OVER AND
OVER AGAIN.

MAYBE *THAT'S*
THE REAL STORY
OF EDWARD
ALLAN BROCK...

...THE MAN OF A
THOUSAND
SECOND CHANCES.

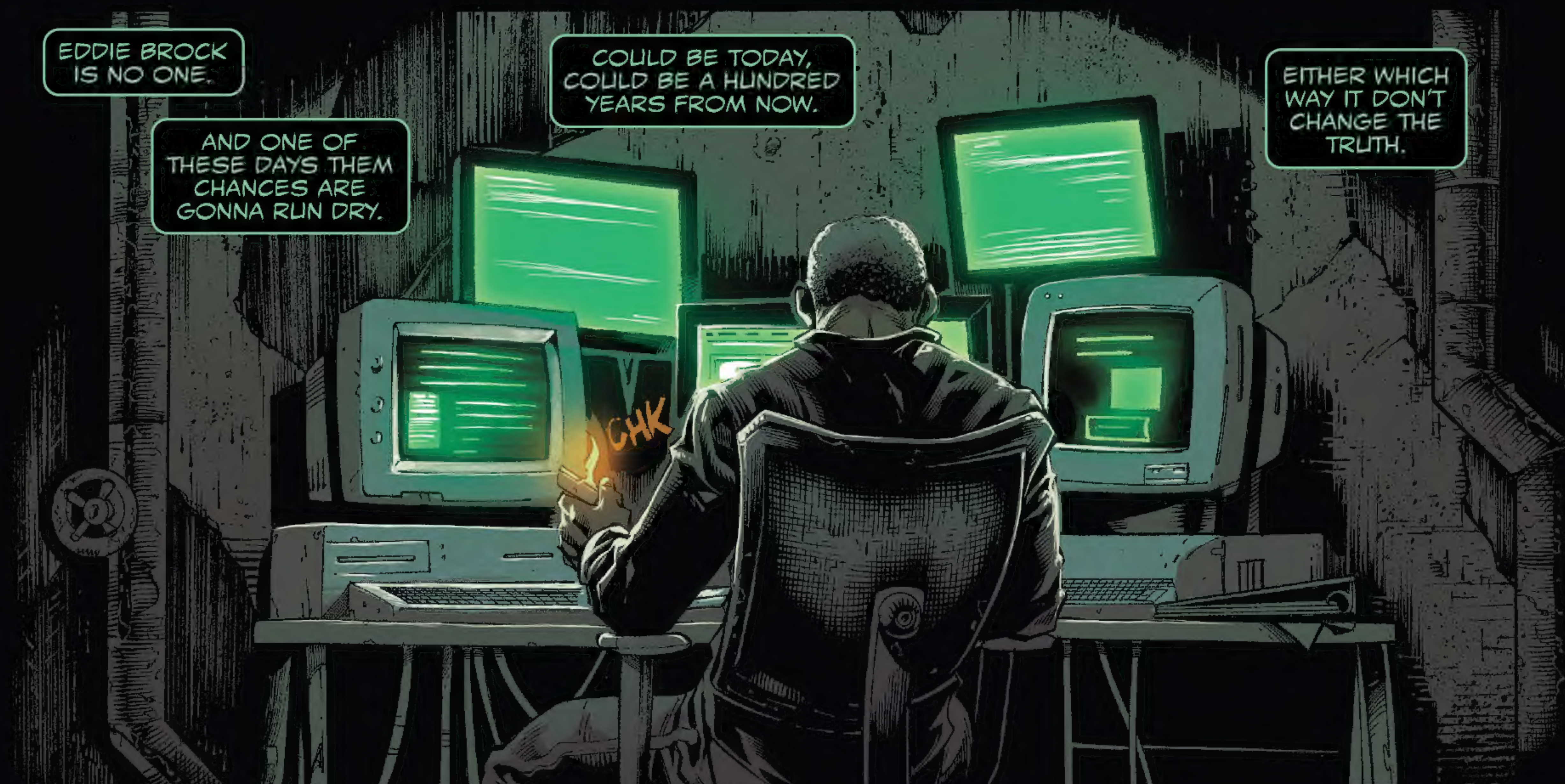


THE
COMEBACK
KING.



TROUBLE IS I
KNOW EXACTLY
WHO HE IS.

I'M JUST TOO
DAMNED SCARED
TO ADMIT IT.



EDDIE BROCK
IS NO ONE.

AND ONE OF
THESE DAYS THEM
CHANCES ARE
GONNA RUN DRY.

COULD BE TODAY,
COULD BE A HUNDRED
YEARS FROM NOW.

EITHER WHICH
WAY IT DON'T
CHANGE THE
TRUTH.



HE'S JUST ANOTHER
DEAD MAN WEARING
HIS OWN COFFIN.



I'M SORRY,
BOYS. IT SHOULD'A
BEEN--



YOUR
MEN ARE
GONE.



AND YOU...

YOU LIED TO US.



EDDIE... W-WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

WHAT THE HELL DO YOU MEAN THEY'RE GONE?!



JUST CALM DOWN AND--
HEY, NO!!!



AGH!

YOU SENT US TO DIE!



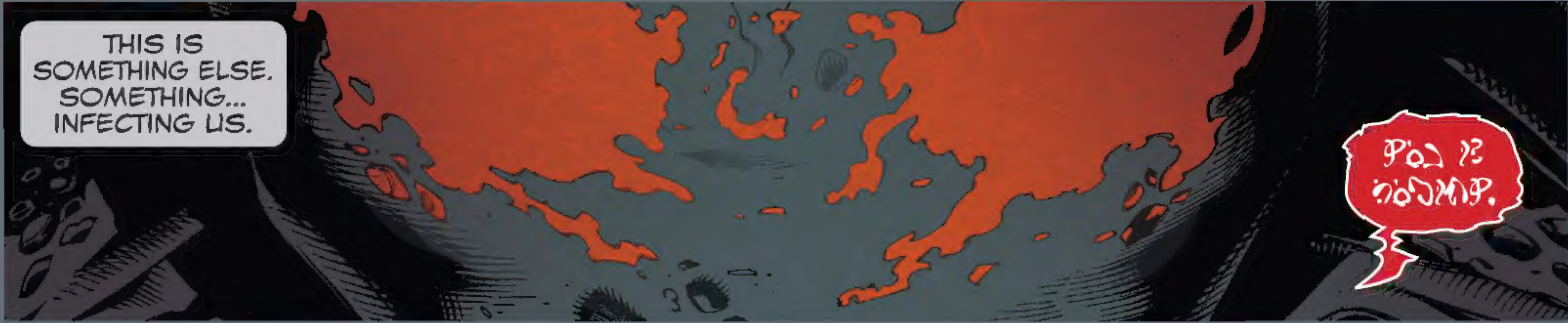
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR GAME IS, STRICKLAND...

...BUT WE AREN'T PLAYING.



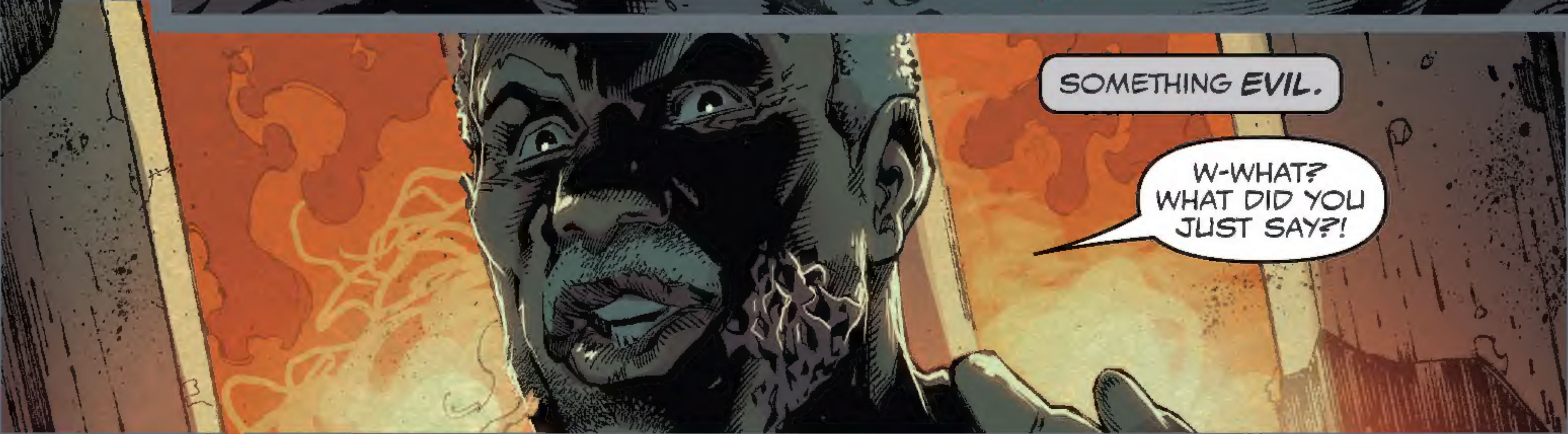
I FEEL IT COMING THIS TIME. THE DARKNESS SLIDING UP MY SPINE AND TAKING CONTROL.

USED TO THINK IT WAS MY OTHER TAKING OVER...BUT NO...



THIS IS SOMETHING ELSE. SOMETHING... INFECTING US.

Poa is no SMP.



SOMETHING EVIL.

W-WHAT? WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?!



GOT TO STOP US. NEED TO FOCUS.

REGAIN CONTROL BEFORE WE KILL THIS MAN.

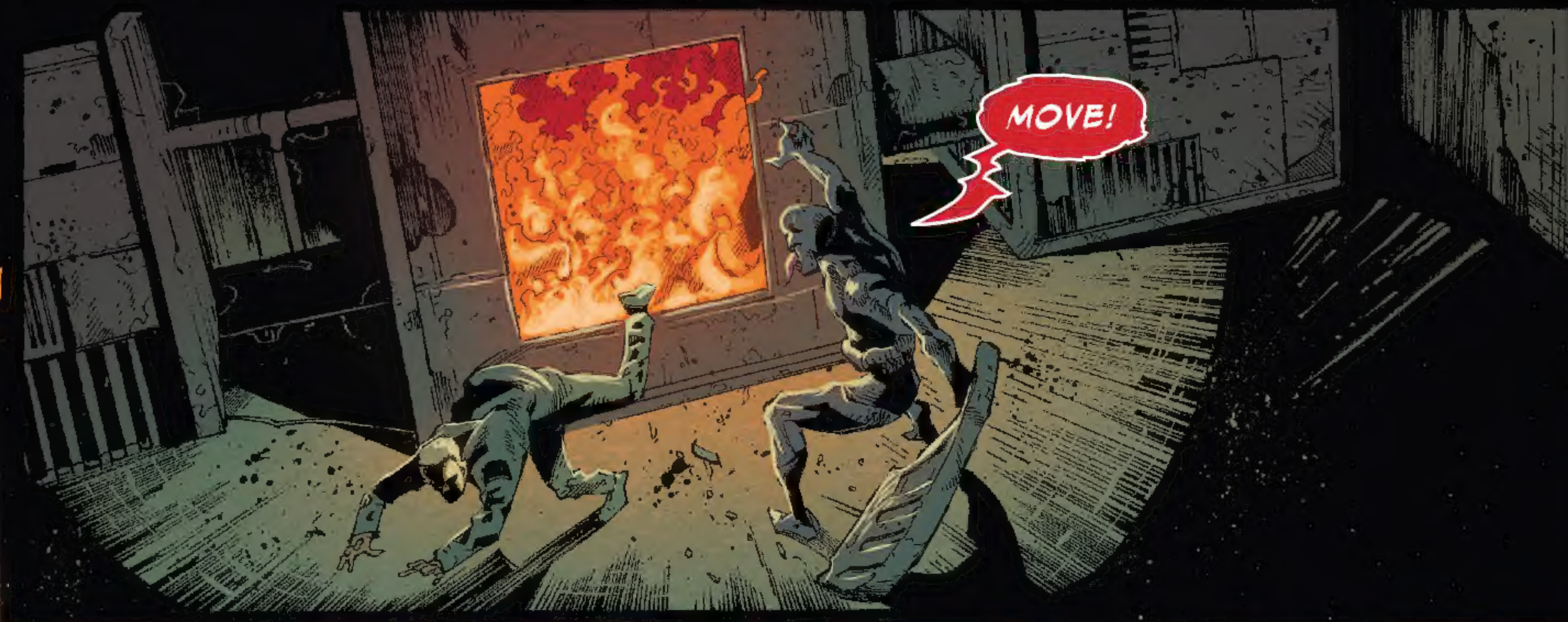


LOSING GROUND. DARK...SEEPING IN... AROUND...EDGE...

FIGHT THIS! BE STRONGER, BROCK!



R-REX!





--MULTIPLE SIGHTINGS ALL ACROSS THE CITY TONIGHT AFTER WHAT WITNESSES ARE DESCRIBING AS, AND I'M QUOTING HERE, "AN OIL-COVERED DRAGON" ERUPTED FROM THE SEWERS HERE IN UPPER MANHATTAN.

NO.

NO, THAT CAN'T BE REAL...



IT WAS BEING TRANSPORTED WITH YOUR MEN.

THEY...THEY WERE INFECTED. LIKE ME JUST NOW, ONLY...WORSE. MORE POWERFUL.

THEY ALMOST KILLED ME, REX. AND THEN YOUR MEN UNLEASHED THAT...THING AND IT KILLED THEM.

RIPPED THEIR SYMBIOTES OFF OF THEM LIKE IT WAS NOTHING.



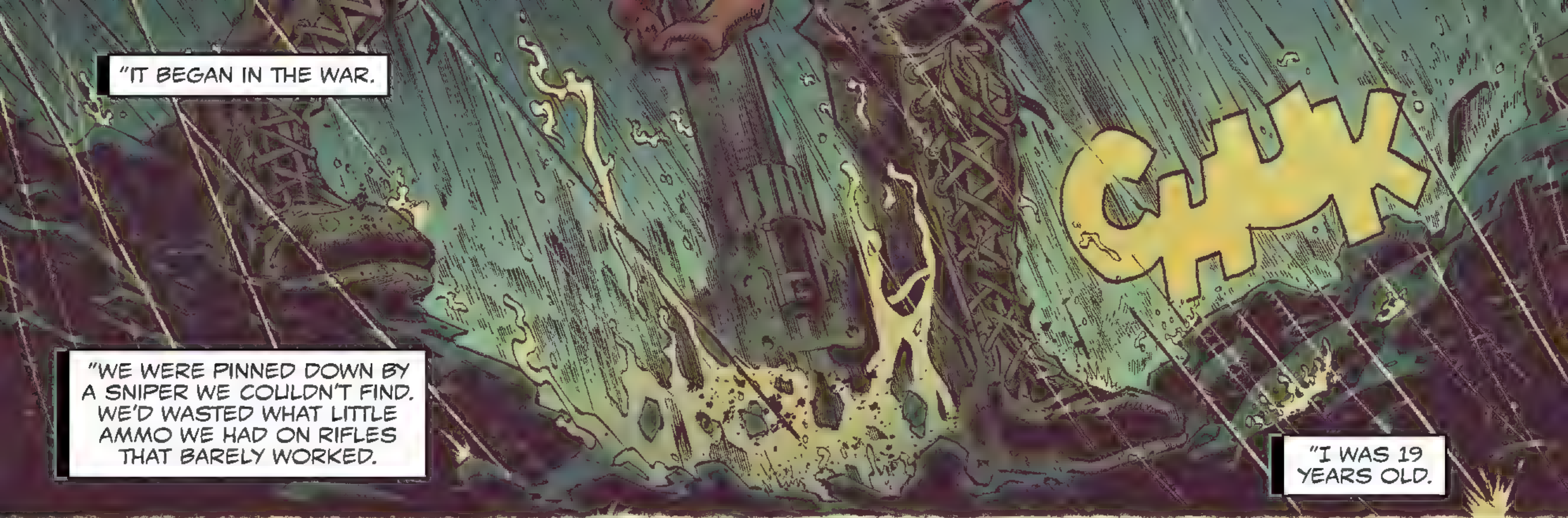
WHAT IS IT? WHAT THE HELL HAVE YOU BROUGHT ME INTO?



I...



...I THOUGHT IT WAS DEAD.



"IT BEGAN IN THE WAR.

"WE WERE PINNED DOWN BY
A SNIPER WE COULDN'T FIND.
WE'D WASTED WHAT LITTLE
AMMO WE HAD ON RIFLES
THAT BARELY WORKED.

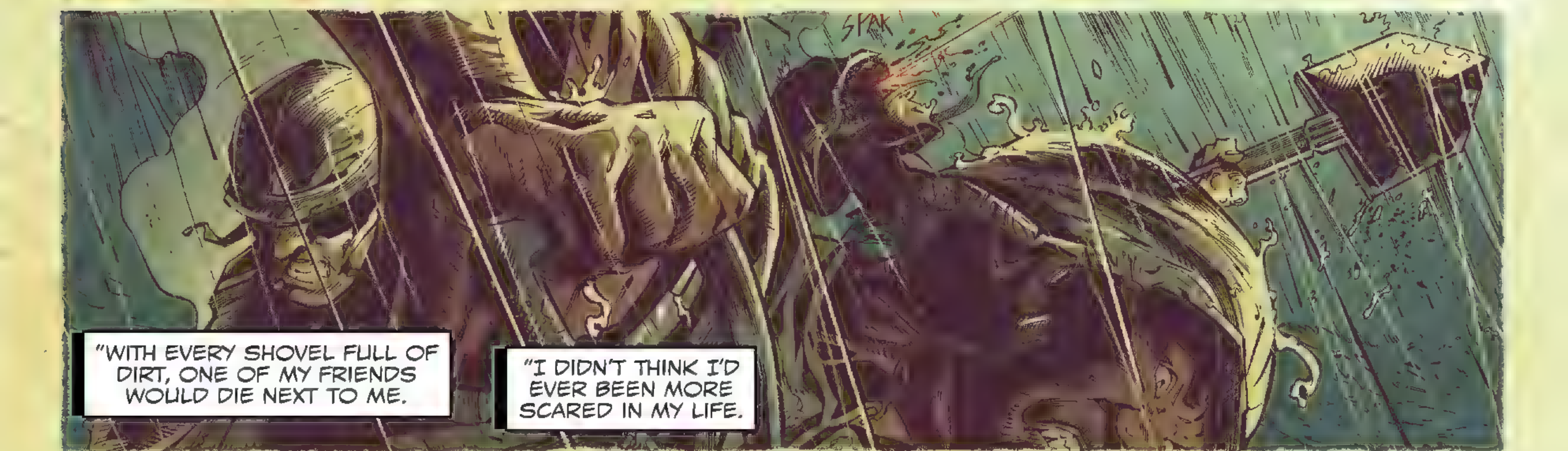
"I WAS 19
YEARS OLD.



"WITH NO COVER, AND AIR
SUPPORT TOO FAR AWAY...


"WE WERE OUT
OF OPTIONS.

"SO WE DUG. WE
DUG IN THE @#&%
TO STAY ALIVE.




"WITH EVERY SHOVEL FULL OF
DIRT, ONE OF MY FRIENDS
WOULD DIE NEXT TO ME.

"I DIDN'T THINK I'D
EVER BEEN MORE
SCARED IN MY LIFE.



"BUT...I
JUST HADN'T
DUG DEEP
ENOUGH.



"WE DISCOVERED TOO
LATE WHAT BECAME OF
THE LAST UNIT TO WANDER
INTO THIS TRAP.

"THEY HAD
DIED THE
SAME WAY
WE WOULD...

"...WHILE DIGGING
OUR OWN GRAVE.



STRICKLAND!
WHAT THE @#%!
ARE YOU DOING?!
DIG, GODDAM--



"I WASN'T
NO KINDA
WAR HERO.

SPAK

KRAK



"I WANT YOU TO GET
THAT OUT OF YOUR
HEAD RIGHT NOW.



"I DID SOME
HORRIBLE THINGS
OVER THERE,
BROCK.

"FOR ALL I KNOW THE MAN
GUNNING US DOWN HAD FAIR
RIGHTS TO HIS REVENGE.

KRAKA DOON



"I JUST WASN'T
ABOUT TO LET
HIM CLAIM IT.

"NOT THAT DAY.




"I KNEW MY BROTHERS WOULD
NEVER GET THAT TRENCH DUG
WHILE SITTING IN THIS @#%!'S
CROSSHAIRS.

"BLIT AGAIN, I AIN'T CAPTAIN
AMERICA. I KNEW I COULDN'T
GET TO THE SHOOTER IN TIME.




"BUT I COULD
DAMN SURE SOAK
UP SOME BULLETS.



"EVERY ONE OF 'EM I
TOOK WAS ONE THAT
DIDN'T TAKE MY FRIENDS.

"ONE MORE
SECOND FOR THEM
TO GET TO COVER.




"THAT WAS SUPPOSED
TO BE THE END OF MY
STORY, BROCK.

"MAYBE THEY'D GIVE MY DAD A
MEDAL. SPIN SOME BULL AND
TELL HIM HOW BRAVE I WAS.



"BUT THAT AIN'T HOW
THE STORY ENDS.




"I REMEMBER
LAUGHING AS I
LOOKED INTO THE
SKY TO SEE THE AIR
SUPPORT WE HAD
PRAYED FOR.

"I REMEMBER FEELING GUILTY
AT THE RELIEF I FELT AS I
CLOSED MY EYES AND WAITED.



"AND THEN ALL
I FELT WAS
NAPALM.




"I SAY ALL OF
THAT TO SAY
THIS:

"WHEN THE MEN WHO
WOULD GRAFT MY
SYMBIOTE ON TO ME
AND TURN ME INTO A
MONSTER CAME WITH
THEIR...OFFER...



"...I WASN'T REALLY IN
ANY POSITION TO ARGUE.




"I REMEMBER
FURY IN THE
SHADOWS.

DO IT.

"I WAS NOTHING
SPECIAL.

"HELL, MAYBE THAT
WAS THE POINT.



"I THOUGHT I HAD SEEN
THE DEVIL IN THE JUNGLE.

"AND TO THIS DAY, I HAVE
NO IDEA WHY HE CHOSE
ME OF ALL PEOPLE.

"THOUGHT I HAD
SEEN HORROR IN
THE WAR.



"BUT I LEARNED THAT DAY
THAT I HAD NEVER SEEN
TRUE DARKNESS.

"I WOKE UP DROWNING.
COULDN'T BREATHE.

"AND THEN...

"THE SYMBIOTE THEY GAVE
ME WAS JUST A **SAMPLE**
OF THIS...BEAST. THIS
HORRIBLE, OLD THING...

"BUT EVEN
WITH THAT
SMALL PIECE...

"...I FELT LIKE I
COULD BREAK
THE GODS OVER
MY KNEE.

"...I LEARNED I DIDN'T
NEED TO BREATHE.
NOT ANYMORE.

"I SAW EVERYTHING
IN THAT MOMENT.

"THE UNIVERSE, AND
THE TISSUE THAT
BINDS EVERYTHING,
MOVING LIKE
TENDRILS THROUGH
THE VOID...

"I KNEW AT
ONCE THAT IT
WAS ANCIENT.
OLDER THAN
US.

"OLDER THAN
THE STARS.

"I SAW GLIMPSES OF WHERE IT
HAD BEEN, AND...AND THE
HORRORS IT HAD UNLEASHED
UPON COUNTLESS CIVILIZATIONS
THAT IT HAD DRIVEN INSANE...
AND THEN DEVoured.

"AND JUST WHEN I THOUGHT
MY MIND WOULD COLLAPSE
FROM THE...FROM THE
ENORMITY OF IT ALL...

"...IT AWOKE. I
FELT IT. AND
IT SPOKE...

"I DIDN'T KNOW
WHAT THE WORDS
MEANT THEN...

"...BUT I DO NOW. BECAUSE
I'VE BEEN HEARING THEM
SCREAMING IN MY
NIGHTMARES EVER SINCE.

"IT SAID...

NEW YORK.
NOW.

"...GOD IS
COMING."

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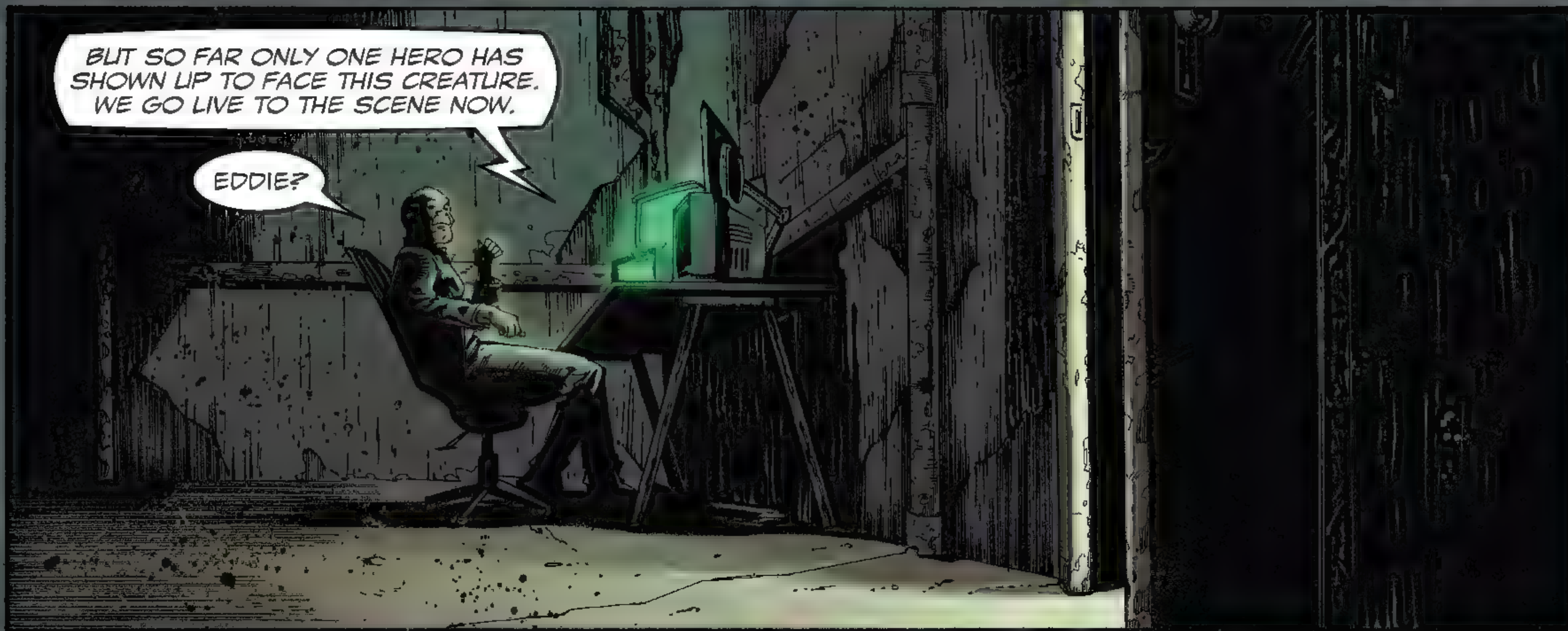
--LIVE ON THE SCENE
AS THE MYSTERIOUS
CREATURE HAS
REAPPEARED!

AH, HELL.



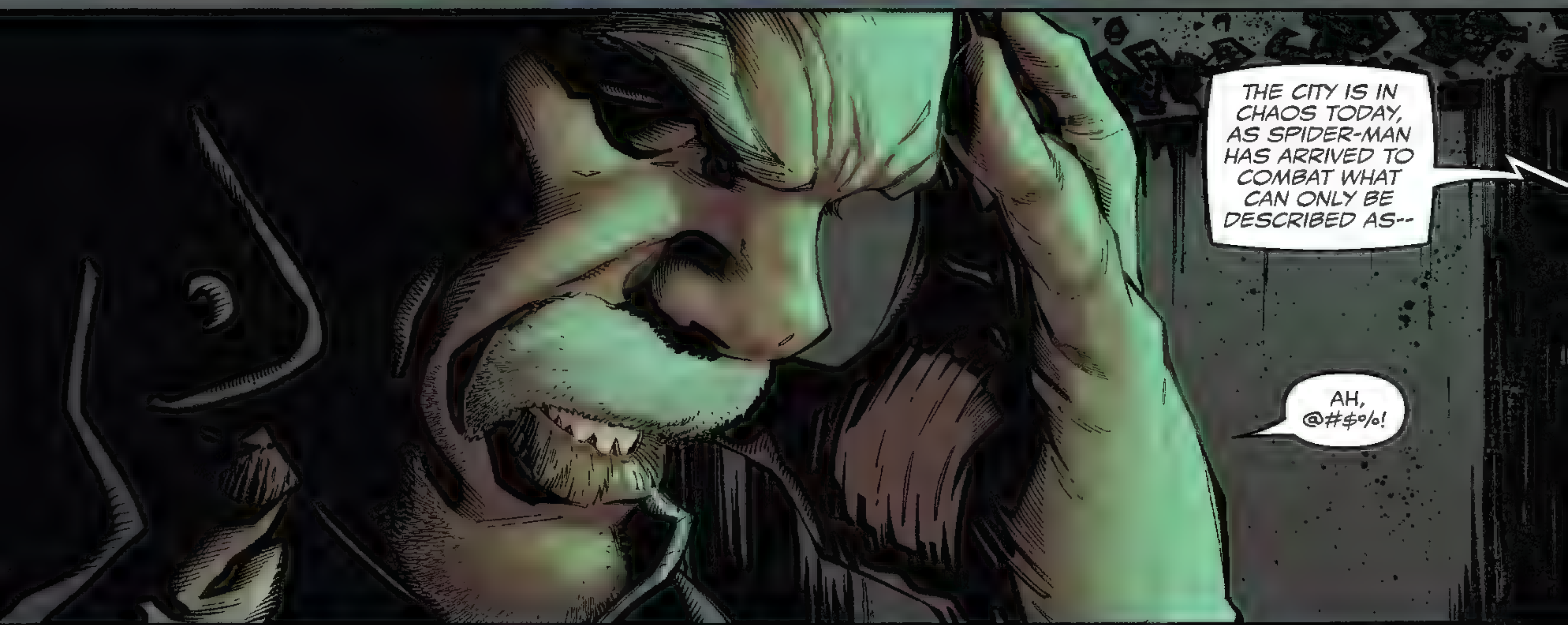
WE ARE NOW RECEIVING
WORD THAT MAYOR FISK
HAS PUT A CALL OUT TO
THE AVENGERS.

OKAY, WE
NEED A GAME
PLAN HERE, BROCK.
YOU CAN'T
JUST--



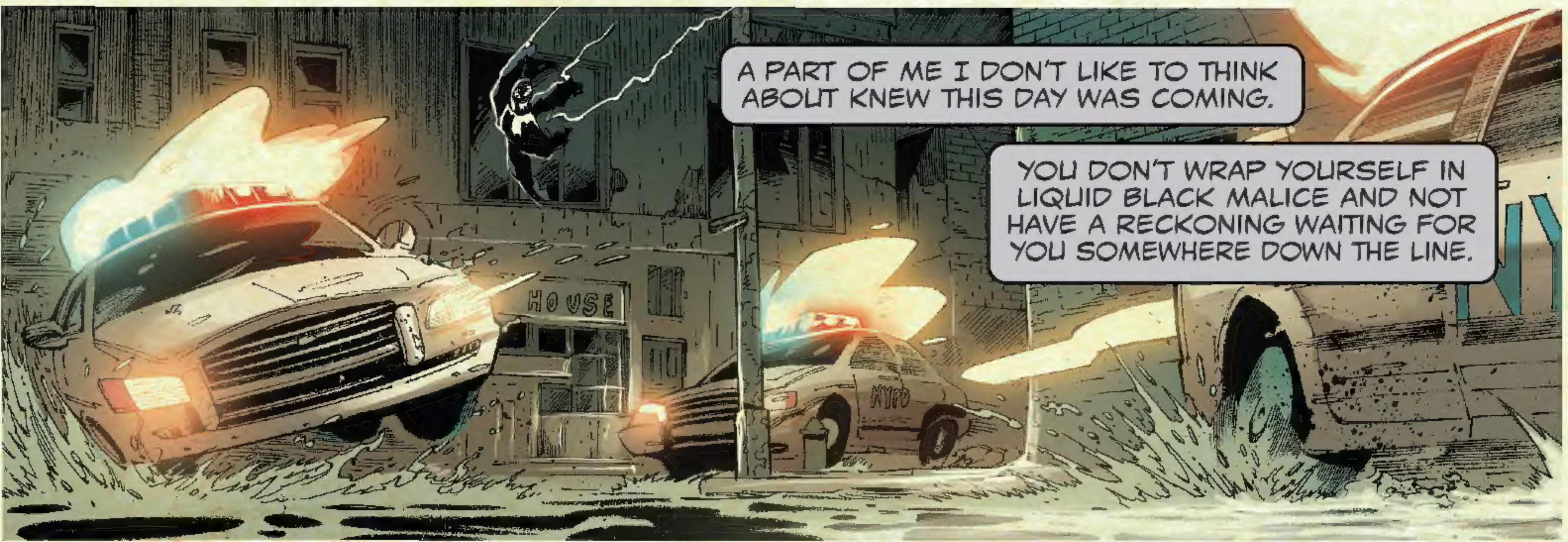
BUT SO FAR ONLY ONE HERO HAS
SHOWN UP TO FACE THIS CREATURE.
WE GO LIVE TO THE SCENE NOW.

EDDIE?



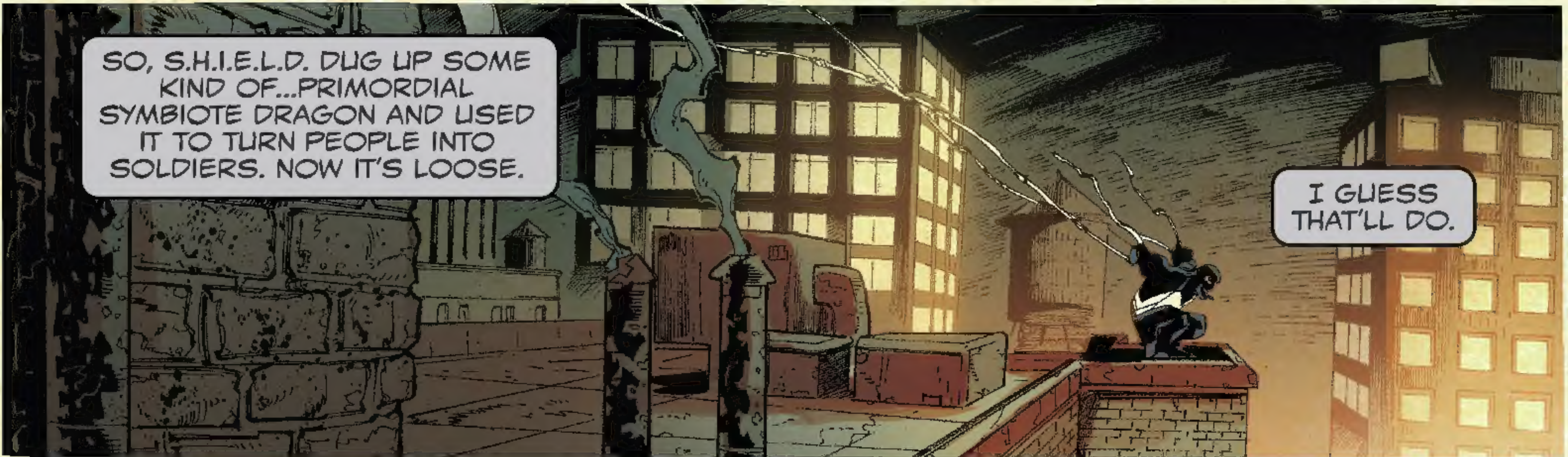
THE CITY IS IN
CHAOS TODAY,
AS SPIDER-MAN
HAS ARRIVED TO
COMBAT WHAT
CAN ONLY BE
DESCRIBED AS--

AH,
@#\$/%!



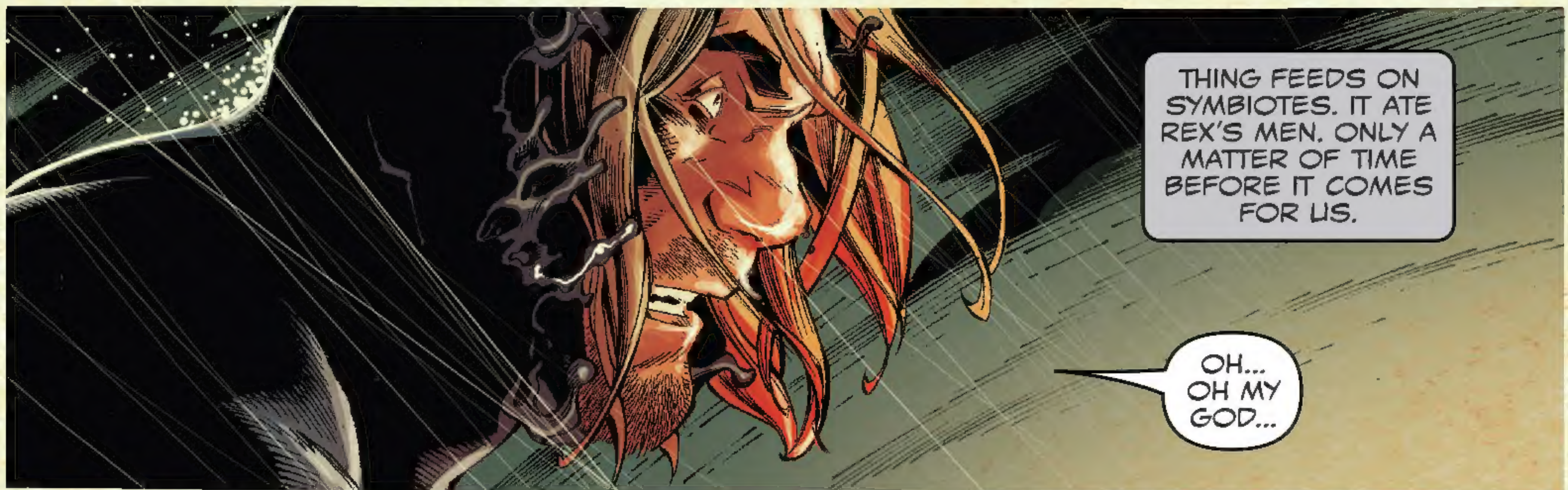
A PART OF ME I DON'T LIKE TO THINK ABOUT KNEW THIS DAY WAS COMING.

YOU DON'T WRAP YOURSELF IN LIQUID BLACK MALICE AND NOT HAVE A RECKONING WAITING FOR YOU SOMEWHERE DOWN THE LINE.



SO, S.H.I.E.L.D. DUG UP SOME KIND OF...PRIMORDIAL SYMBIOTE DRAGON AND USED IT TO TURN PEOPLE INTO SOLDIERS. NOW IT'S LOOSE.

I GUESS THAT'LL DO.



THING FEEDS ON SYMBIOTES. IT ATE REX'S MEN. ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE IT COMES FOR US.

OH...
OH MY GOD...



WELL, WE AIN'T WAITING AROUND TO DIE.

IF OUR DAY IS COMING...



...LET IT COME.

TO BE CONTINUED...

VENOM

#3!

HEY, VENOMANIACS! AT THE TIME OF THIS WRITING, VENOM #1 ISN'T EVEN ON SALE YET, SO WE DON'T HAVE ANY LETTERS FROM YOU AT THE MOMENT. DON'T LET THAT STOP YOU, THOUGH! GO GRAB #1 AND LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK OF THE WHOLE STORY SO FAR BY WRITING TO US AT SPIDEYOFFICE@MARVEL.COM! BE SURE TO MARK YOUR LETTERS "OKAY TO PRINT"!



